



**Commonwealth of Kentucky
Personnel Cabinet Communications Office**

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19th Annual EEO Conference

Affirmative Action Merit Recommendations Addressed & State Trek to gain Employee Input Announced

Frankfort, KY – Personnel Cabinet Secretary Erwin Roberts spoke from the heart today at the 19th Annual Equal Employment Opportunity (EEO) Conference held in Louisville.

“There is still a lot of ignorance out there (regarding equal opportunity), but I’m not mad,” Roberts said. “It comes back to three things I learned: tolerance, patience, forgiveness.” Secretary Roberts encouraged the nearly 400 state workers who attended the EEO Conference to be involved and to be proud.

Secretary Roberts addressed 3 merit recommendations concerning affirmative action that have been proposed by the Merit Blue Ribbon Task Force:

1. To conduct a disparity study which will break down the number of employees in each job category by gender and race. “This will let us know what problems we have (with the merit system) and what tools we need to fix these problems,” Roberts said.
2. Updating the affirmative action plan which will include penalties for those agencies that do not meet affirmative action goals and rewards for those that do.
3. Additional training for agencies to adequately meet the affirmative action goals set forth by Governor Ernie Fletcher.

“Those three things, if they come to pass, will make history in Kentucky,” said Roberts. Secretary Roberts encouraged support for the proposed merit changes regarding affirmative action.

Roberts also announced his plan to visit state employees throughout the Commonwealth in the coming days to discuss all of the proposed merit recommendations and gain their input to share with task force members and with Governor Fletcher.

The first employee input merit recommendation meeting will be held in Frankfort on Monday, October 17 at the Transportation Cabinet Conference Center at 10:00 a.m. Other meetings will be held across the state October 24 – 31, 2005.

Governor Fletcher will address EEO attendees tomorrow morning, beginning at 11:00 a.m.